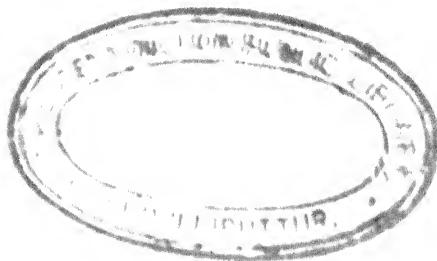


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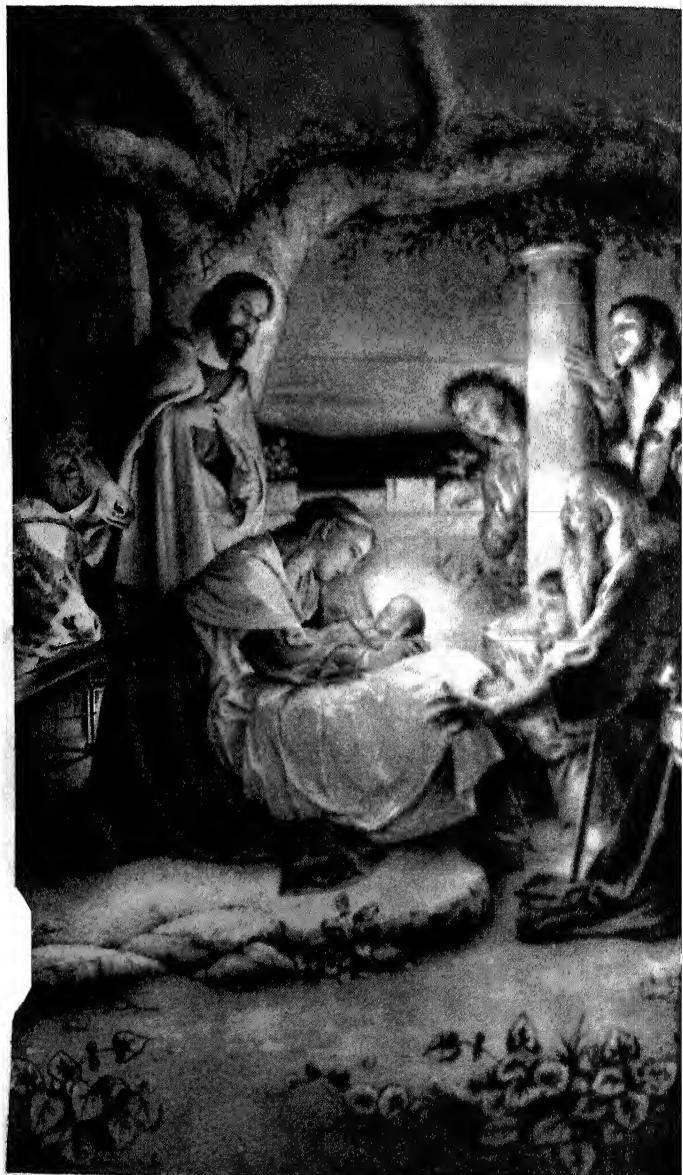
UNCLE ARTHUR'S
BEDTIME STORIES
Fifth Series



With Every Good Wish

To

From



Jesus Born in Bethlehem

After Matisse

Uncle Arthur's BEDTIME STORIES (FIFTH SERIES)

By ARTHUR S. MAXWELL

"Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish."
Matthew 18:14.

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PREFACE

WELL, mothers and children—and fathers too, of course—here we come to see you once again. Ever so many thanks for all the kind letters you have sent about the other Bedtime Stories in Series One to Four.

Since the first few copies were sent out in 1924, the books have been translated into several languages and printed in England, Norway, Sweden, Argentina, Panama, Canada, besides, of course, the United States. We have rejoiced in the privilege of dedicating these little volumes to such a world-wide ministry to the children of men.

Now here is Number Five. In one respect it differs from those that have gone before. In the story of "Doreen's Jewel Box" we have endeavored in a somewhat novel way to arouse the interest of the children in the study of the Bible. If we have succeeded, much good, we believe, will result.

That this new volume of stories may bring great blessing to parents and children alike the world around, is a sincere prayer of

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Anne Shriber, N.Y.

"Oh, This Needle!"

Teresina*

A CHRISTMAS STORY

“Oh, this needle!” said Dorothy. “It simply won’t thread.”

“Never mind,” said Sylvia, sewing away gaily, “think of Christmas, when all the dresses will be finished, and we can take Marguerita and Roxana out in their new carriage.”

“And Teresina,” said Dorothy. “She would have to have the best place. Do you know, I don’t believe there ever has been a doll so beautiful as my Teresina. She has such lovely hair. And her face is so pretty I could just keep on kissing it.”

“Yes,” agreed Sylvia, “she is very beautiful. You are lucky to have her. I wish Auntie would send me one like that.”

Teresina listened carefully from her seat on the floor, and felt very much pleased with herself.

“You know,” added Dorothy, “one reason I can’t stand that Kitty Larson is that she will pass remarks about Teresina when I see her.”

“What can you expect?” said Sylvia. “Her people are very poor. What has she said to you lately?”

“Oh, nothing much, but she makes me mad. Wh- remember that it started to rain when I wa- day? Well, she happened to pass, an- was with, ‘If that were my doll, I wou- than that!’ Just as though I don’t look after my dolls!”

I wish she would just mind her own business and leave own dolls."

"I don't see how she can," said Sylvia. "They're all one-legged little things. I'd throw them in the garbage if they were mine."

"So would I," said Dorothy.

Just then the front door banged.

"Must be mother coming back," said Sylvia.

It was, and a few moments later mother burst into room, all excitement.

"Oh, girls!" she said, collapsing into a chair, "we've lost baby brother just now."

"Why, whatever happened?" cried both together.

"I was crossing Princess Street, pushing the baby in cart, when someone cried, 'Look out!' and I stopped right in the middle of the road. A car swerved round, skidded, and knocked down a child. I do feel dreadful about it."

"Poor Mother," said Sylvia, "you must lie down once."

"Perhaps I'd better," said mother. "Look after baby won't you? and put him to bed."

The girls agreed, and mother went to her room for rest.

All thought of dolls and dresses was driven out of girls' minds by this exciting news. How glad they were that baby brother had not been hurt! Poor Teresina was quite put out when she saw the way they cuddled him.

"I do hope the child that saved you isn't badly hurt, baby dear," said Sylvia.

"I hope he isn't," said Dorothy. "And imagine its happening just before Christmas. How sad!"

Early the next morning mother started off to the hospital to find out how the child was getting on. She was gone a long time, and the girls began to wonder what could have happened to her. They were watching for her out of the window and were just beginning to get anxious when footsteps were heard coming up the garden path.

"I've been to the hospital, and I've been around to see the child's mother," she began.

"Is he badly hurt?"

"Not very; and it is not a boy, but a little girl. She just has a bad cut on her head, but will be all right again in a few days. She says she was so afraid baby would be killed that she forgot all about herself and just shouted for all she was worth."

"What's her name?" asked Sylvia.

"I think she said it was Catherine," said mother.

"What a name!" said Dorothy.

"Never mind," said mother, "she is a good little girl, and you should see her home! We really must do something for them. There are several children, and the father is out of work. They don't seem to have any money, and the poor mother just broke down and cried when we talked about this new trouble."

"What can we do for them?" asked Sylvia.

"I've done one thing already," said mother.

"What's that?" asked

"Why, when the poor with her, and that she ~~couldn't~~ ^{hope to} say anything for Christmas, I invited them all up here to a party."

"What a good idea, Mother!" said the girls.

"Yes, and I told the little girl that she could invite half

a dozen of her best friends as well. So we shall have a lively time."

"I should think we shall," said Dorothy. "And we must get things ready for them—presents and bags of candy and nuts and fruit, you know."

"And couldn't daddy dress up as Santa Claus?" said Sylvia.

"That would be splendid," said mother. "I think we shall have a wonderful time. And shall we pack a nice big basket for them for Christmas morning?"

"Oh, let's do!" said Sylvia. "I should love to help get it ready."

And so the preparations began. There was not much time before the party, which was to take place two days before Christmas. Dorothy and Sylvia began making a list of presents they would need, and, oh, what joy they had going downtown looking for them in the stores! Of course, mother had to help a good deal with the money, but they put in some themselves out of their own savings boxes. As the days passed, they became more and more excited about it and thought of all sorts of things they might do for their poor little guests.

"You know," said Sylvia one evening, "I've been wondering whether we shouldn't give away Marguerita and Roxana to two of the little girls."

"It would be dreadfully hard," said Dorothy, "but I think I should like to do it. Of course, I wouldn't think of giving Teresina away. I couldn't think of that."

"Oh, no," said Sylvia. "But we could make Marguerita and Roxana two special presents."

"I will if you will," said Dorothy.

"All right," said Sylvia, and the gifts were planned.

"Meanwhile the little girl was discharged from the hospital. Returning to her home, she found it full of excitement over the wonderful and unexpected invitation that had been given them. Of course, they all did their best to make themselves as clean and tidy as possible for the great occasion. The little girl herself went around to six of her best friends, and told them to get ready to go along too. In every case it came as a great surprise, because they all belonged to quite poor homes, and it had seemed as if Christmas were going to be very ordinary for them this year.

'At last the great evening arrived. A car came to pick up the poor children, and wasn't it a gay little company inside on the way up to the house where the party was to be held! Mother was on the doorstep ready to greet them, and she gave a specially tight hug to the little girl with the bandage round her head, leading her to her place at the big table.

Dorothy and Sylvia were still upstairs dressing when the party arrived, but they soon came tumbling down, all excitement and anxious to see what their little guests were like. They shook hands all around, giving the children a very jolly welcome.

"But where's the little girl that saved baby brother?" asked Sylvia.

"In the dining room with mother," said someone.

Dorothy and Sylvia rushed in with all the other children at their heels. The girl with the bandage was at the other end of the room.

Suddenly they stopped.

"It can't be," whispered Dorothy to Sylvia.

"It is, I'm sure it is," whispered Sylvia. "But we must make her welcome."



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12 "Will Kitty Larson Please Stand Up?"

"Come, girls," called mother, "do come and speak to the little girl who ——"

She did not finish, for the girls had now recognized one another.

"If it isn't Kitty Larson!" said Dorothy out loud. "Why, Mother, we have often seen her before. And you never told us that this was the little girl! I thought you said her name was Catherine."

"So it is," said the little girl. "But they call me Kitty."

"Well, we're so glad you are here," said Sylvia, "and thank you ever so much for shouting just in time to save baby, and perhaps mother, too."

Then they started eating, and what rollicking fun they all enjoyed while it was going on! The poor children had never had such a good time in their lives before.

The only person who did not seem to be enjoying herself very much was Dorothy. Presently she quietly left the table and went into another room for a few moments. When she returned, she was looking much happier.

Quickly the evening passed. At last there came a loud knock at the door, the lights were turned down, and in came "Santa Claus" with a big bag of presents over his back. What shrieks of delight as he began to pass around the lovely gifts that Dorothy and Sylvia had prepared!

"Now," said Santa Claus, as he took the one last bulky package out of his bag and began to open it, "this is a special present for a special little girl. Will Kitty Larson please stand up?"

Kitty stood, and her eyes opened wide.

"Stop him!" whispered Sylvia to Dorothy. "There's been a mistake. Stop him before it's too late."

"No, it's all right," said Dorothy. "I simply couldn't help it. I changed them just now during supper."

They were interrupted by Kitty.

"Oh, thank you, thank you ever so much," she said. "Can you really spare her?"

"She is yours, with all our love," said Dorothy with a brave smile, though she felt like weeping bucketfuls of tears. It was Teresina.

Pearlie's Pennies

PEARLIE was one of those lucky little children who live by the seaside. Her home was only ten minutes' walk from the beach. Almost any time she wished she could walk along the sea front or go and dig in the sand. No waiting for months and months while daddy saved up enough money to take her there. The sea and the sand were almost at her doorstep. Wasn't she a fortunate little girl!

One would think that, having so many good things, Pearlie would have been the very best little girl in the world. Surely a little girl living so close to the sea could never be naughty! But alas! if the truth must be told, she could—when she felt like it—be the most disobedient child you ever heard of.

Pearlie had a dear, kind mother, who did all she could to please her and make her happy. If anything, mother was too good to her, and let her have her own way too much. But Pearlie somehow didn't seem to appreciate it.

One day her uncle came to visit them. While he was there, Pearlie was the nicest child on earth, and "butter wouldn't melt in her mouth," she was so good. Uncle was so pleased with her that he gave her a whole dollar and ten bright pennies all for herself, and went away thinking that no uncle had a nicer little niece anywhere.

But when he had gone! Dear me! Mother asked her to lay the supper table.

"Don't want to lay the supper table," said Pearlie.

"But you must help mamma sometimes."

"Don't want to help you. You're always asking me to do something."

"But aren't you going to have supper as well as the rest of us?"

"Yes, but I never get any time to myself; you are always making me work."

"Don't be foolish, Pearlie. Lay the table at once."

Thinking she had gone about far enough, Pearlie began to lay the table, but with a sulky face and her lips pouting out almost beyond the end of her nose.

At suppertime there was another scene over the money uncle had given her. Mother suggested very nicely that she had better put it in her savings box so that she could buy something special on her next birthday.

"Don't want to put it in my box," snapped Pearlie.

"But what do you want to do with it, then?" asked mother.

"Buy candy with it. Uncle said I could do what I like with it."

"But mamma is here to tell you what is best."

"And you always say I have to put it in my box, and I never have any pennies to spend, and — and —"

Pearlie began to pout worse than ever, and sat back in her chair so far that she seemed almost to disappear under the table.

Mother took her upstairs and put her to bed, but it didn't seem to make any difference. All next day she was the same. By dinnertime mother was so tired of her that she said she had better go for a walk by the sea, and let the wind blow the crossness out of her. Pearlie agreed to this suggestion quickly, thinking it would save her from helping mother dry the dishes.

"Good-by, dear," said mother. "And do come back good. You can walk along the front as far as the pier and back, but, mind, no farther, and don't go on the pier or on the breakwaters."

"All right, Mamma," said Pearlie; "good-by."

And away she went.

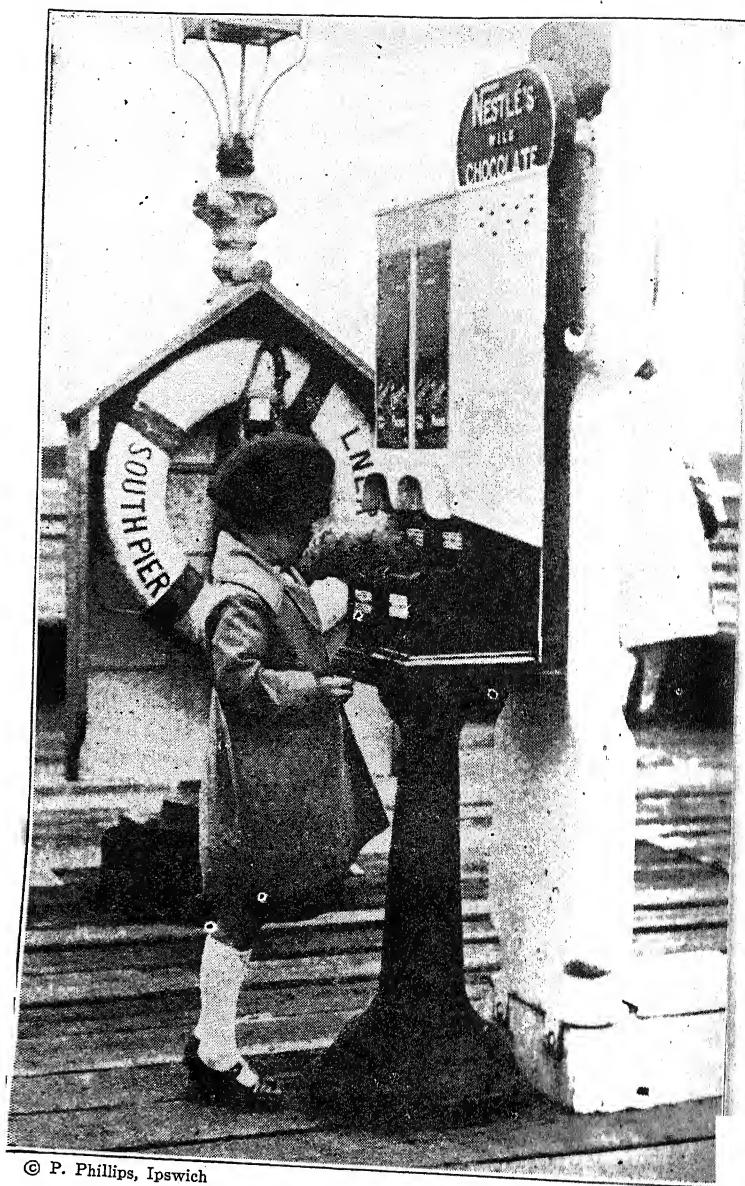
Gaily she trotted along the promenade, watching the waves roll up on the shore, and stopping now and then to talk with other children who were playing on the beach. After a while she reached the pier.

She had often been on the pier with her mother, and enjoyed it very much indeed. She could never understand why she was not allowed to go on it by herself, and as she came up to the entrance this time, the thought came to her, Why not go on now? Mamma will never know, and I shall have a really nice time all by myself. I wonder how much it is?

She looked about and saw a notice: "Entrance 4 cents. Children half price." She felt in her pocket. Hurrah! She had brought all her pennies and the dollar as well. Of course she wouldn't spend that, for she really did want to buy something nice with it from the store, but the pennies, well—no one would know what she had done with them. She decided to go on.

Once through the gate she felt safer. Mother would never be able to find her now, she thought, so she could spend her pennies just how she liked. Soon she saw a chocolate machine and decided that one penny should go in there. She felt very proud of herself as she pulled out the little red packet of chocolate, and how nice it did taste!

Then she saw a weighing machine, and thought it would be nice to feel what it was like to be weighed. She put in



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her penny and something went wiggly-woggly in front of her and that was all, except that she heard her precious penny drop down somewhere inside. It was rather disappointing.

Then she spied a machine that had a little gun inside. "This looks exciting," she said to herself, pushing her penny into the narrow slit. She pulled the trigger, but nothing happened. She pulled it again and banged the machine with her hands, but to no avail. Then she noticed a slip of paper inside with the words, "Out of Order."

Her next penny she tried in a machine that offered to tell her fortune. Out came a dirty slip of paper with a lot of tiny print on it which she could not understand.

"Horrid old machines!" she said, getting as angry with them as she had been with her mother the night before. "You've taken six of my pennies and I've only four left!"

How she wished she had not been so foolish! But it was no use crying; they were gone. She put her hand in her pocket for the others. She could not feel them. A fear came into her little heart that she might have put them all into the machines, the dollar as well.

Desperately she pulled everything out of her pocket. Out came the chocolate wrapper, a piece of string, a glove, a paper bag, another glove, and lastly her handkerchief.

As she pulled out the handkerchief there was a tinkle on the wooden boards of the pier, and away went the pennies and the dollar in different directions.

The pennies did not get very far. Pearlie watched them go into a crack in the boards and fall through into the sea. Then her eyes caught sight of her precious dollar rolling toward the side of the pier, where there was nothing to prevent it from leaping after its copper brothers.



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"Something Went Wiggly-Woggly in Front of Her"

"My dollar, my dollar!" cried Pearlie, half mad with disappointment, and running after it as fast as her little legs would carry her.

On went the dollar and after it went Pearlie. Nearer and nearer it rolled to the edge, where only a chain, eighteen inches from the floor, stood between the little girl and the water far below.

"I've got it!" she cried, stooping down and stretching out her arm.

But no, it slipped out of her fingers and slid over the edge. Grabbing at it again, Pearlie lost her balance and slipped under the protecting chain.

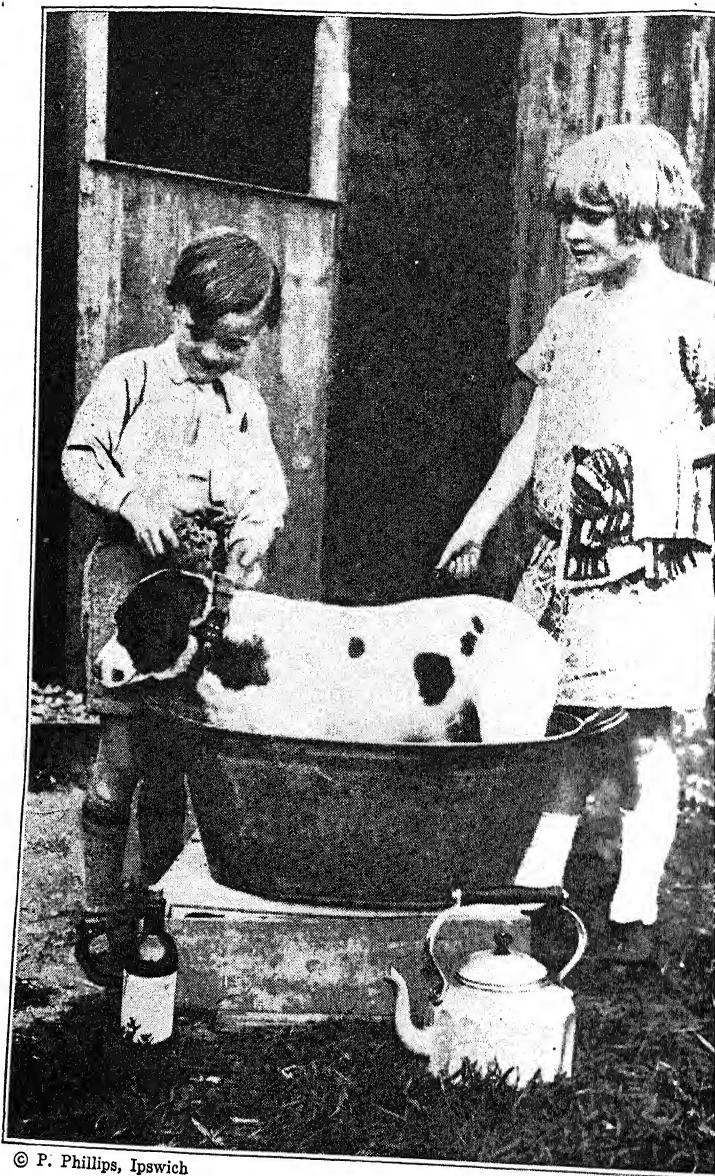
Splash!

* * * * *

When Pearlie woke up she found herself in her own bed at home with a hot water bottle at her feet and a nice fire blazing in the room. Mother was sitting beside her bed.

Pearlie began to remember things, and put out her hand. Mother took it in hers.

"I'm so sorry, Mamma dear," she whispered. "I'll never, never, never be so bad again."



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22 *"A Strange, Determined Look Came Into His Eyes"*

sponged his ears. Then he began to kick and jump and splash the water all over the place.

"Hold him, Paul," cried Barbara, "or he'll jump out!"

"Can't you see I'm holding him as hard as I can?" said Paul. "You go on washing him."

Barbara started, while Paul tried to keep Toby in the bath. She got as far as covering the whole of him with a good layer of soap, when something happened.

For a moment Toby became very still. He seemed to forget that he was being bathed. His eyes had caught sight of something down the garden. His back stiffened, his tail stood up, and with a loud "Yap, Yap," he shook his collar free, leaped from the bath, and dashed away at top speed.

"Stop him!" cried Barbara helplessly, wiping the water from her dress and ankles.

"You'll never stop him!" said Paul. "Can't you see there's Mrs. Tomkin's cat!"

"Oh dear!" cried Barbara. "I do hope he doesn't hurt her."

There was no fear of that, for this particular pussy had often been chased by Toby, and knew every possible hiding place in both the garden and the house.

"Oh, look!" cried Barbara, as dog and cat raced hither and yon, across the flower beds, and in and out among the trees and bushes. "What a dreadful mess Toby will be."

She was right. By this time Toby's soap-covered body had gathered up mud, leaves, and bits of twig, until he looked as if he had never had a bath in his life.

"I only hope daddy doesn't look out the window until we've got him cleaned up," said Paul.